

DFEH News Brief

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Contact: Annmarie Billotti
916-478-7247
annmarie.billotti@dfeh.ca.gov

STATE LAUNCHES DFEH-UCI CIVIL RIGHTS CLINIC

ELK GROVE, CA – The California Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH) today announced that it has partnered with the University of California, Irvine School of Law (UCI) to develop an innovative civil rights clinic for law students. The partnership's goals are to train a future generation of lawyers to combat systemic discrimination, and to develop a pipeline for law students interested in future employment with the DFEH and related State agencies.

"UCI is a key partner in our outreach to future lawyers at a time when the DFEH must maximize its resources to serve all Californians," said Anna Caballero, Secretary of California's State and Consumer Services Agency. "The Department's partnership with UCI benefits students, businesses and consumers in the state."

Prompted by the Department's recent historic \$6,011,190 class action settlement against Verizon Services Corp. and Verizon California, Inc., the DFEH has partnered with UCI to develop a summer campus program covering intake, investigation, prosecution, and settlement of class and individual civil rights complaints. Working under the supervision of Department attorneys, UCI law students will evaluate Verizon claims to determine claimants' rights under the California Family Rights Act and their appropriate level of award under the class settlement. During the academic year, UCI law students also may work on other DFEH cases.

"The Department is delighted to partner with UCI to involve law students in our historic class action case," said DFEH Director Phyllis Cheng. "These law students will be the civil rights leaders of the future."

"UCI is proud to be the first to join this creative partnership with the DFEH," added UCI School of Law Dean Erwin Chemerinsky. "It is a pleasure to welcome the DFEH to our campus to help educate a new generation of civil rights attorneys."

The DFEH is exploring the development of civil rights partnerships with additional universities and colleges.

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The mission of the DFEH is to protect the people of California from unlawful discrimination in employment, housing and public accommodations and from hate violence. For more information about the DFEH and the laws it enforces, visit the Department's website at www.dfeh.ca.gov.